



NATIONAL
GOVERNORS
ASSOCIATION



**Winter Meeting Report
February 9-11, 2023
Washington, D. C.**

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Introduction

The National Governors Association (NGA) is a resource for Governors and cabinet members, state policy experts, the U.S. Congress, and private enterprise. The NGA provides various services and training to help collaboratively tell the state's and territories' story. The NGA teams work side-by-side with state and territorial leaders to identify challenges, brainstorm solutions, and provide information on resources to help Governors stay ahead of the challenges before they become problems.

Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga and a few of his cabinet members and staff attended the NGA 2023 winter meeting on February 9-11, 2023 in Washington D.C. At this winter meeting, the team from American Samoa joined federal officials and leaders from business, academia and philanthropy for solutions-driven conversations around the top issues in states and territories.



Public Health and Disaster Response Task Force

Attendees: Director Lisa Tuato'o

The Public Health and Disaster Task Force has jurisdiction over a broad range of issues in the areas including Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Guard, cybersecurity,



health care, immigration, human services, and COVID-19 issues related to testing, vaccines, supply chain, and personal protective equipment. The focus of this breakout session was “How Governors can respond to Energy disruptions.”

The panelists were led by the Co-Chairs Ned Lamont and Phil Scott and joined by Jason Bordoff of the Center for Global Energy Policy, Allison Clements, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), Puesh Kumar, U.S. Department of Energy. In his

opening remarks, Governor Phil Scott of Vermont shared about their participation in the road ahead electrifying their transportation with the use of electric vehicles and charging stations. Beta Technologies is leading the way in electric aviation as the way into the future. Their legislature created a climate council that adopted the California Clean Air Rules which means vehicles sold after 2035 have to be electric. The dependence on electricity will only grow. Mr. Kumar from the United States Department of Education (USDOE) discussed resources available to states. He took the lead in cybersecurity, energy security, and emergency response, or CESER. He discussed the resources that can be received from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) which provides “a strategic opportunity to upgrade the nation’s energy infrastructure for a clean, resilient, secure energy future.” Extreme weather experienced nationwide and the continued threat of cyber-attacks on energy systems can disrupt energy supplies, the economy, and daily operations. How do we build resilience with infrastructure when disrupted?

With the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding, USDOE received \$27 billion to upgrade and modernize electrical grids for all states and territories to build resilience to unexpected weather situations and hardened infrastructures to prevent them. protect and secure jurisdictions from cyber-attacks. Ms. Brandi Martin is the USDOE point of contact (POC) assigned to work and create partnerships with the states, local, tribal, and territories. It is recognized that a partnership must be formed to have a stronger position in moving forward. Our focus is the



security and resilience of the US energy sector, from cyber to physical, to climate-based risks. The electricity sector, oil and gas providers, and renewable companies connecting to the grids today and tomorrow in light of all the risks and threats upon us. The Worldwide Threats assessment continues to highlight China and Russia having the ability to disrupt electricity and natural gas using cyber means. Cyber threat on energy grids is a real threat. Physical attacks include copper theft and targeted gunfire that the FBI interrupted and prevented from happening. We need to enhance the awareness of states and territories to avoid having power interruptions for days. Climate-based risks are increasing with extreme weather incidents with natural disasters like fire, drought, and flooding. We need to build resilience and BIL is an opportunity for funding that can help us with these goals. The money is going directly to states and territories to build out risk profiles in your jurisdictions and we will continue to work with states and territories on the State Energy Security Plans. The USDOE will work with states' and territories' energy offices and hoping Homeland Security advisors will come to the table for this. We need to develop these plans and implement informed projects for states and territories. We need to develop preparedness plans for 5 years down the line. We need to help law enforcement on the local level, working with the FBI, Fusion centers using the BIL funding. CESER wants to partner with states and territories in a more coordinated way.

The White House will release the Strategy soon and all of these will help in moving forward as the emphasis is placed on safety in our future. We need to develop playbooks now and not wait until during disasters. We need to be more prepared. Cybersecurity to energy grids is a real threat



because when electricity is disrupted at an electricity facility, it can cause a major catastrophe for our people. We need to work together as a team in our holistic approach to this. We need Homeland Security Advisors to work with Energy to prevent attacks on our critical infrastructures. Uniting stakeholders and having them work together will solidify our defense and abilities to defend ourselves. When building grids of the future in the territories, how do we think of micro-grids, and battery storage, to ensure resilience during a potentially really bad day with attacks? According to Allison of

FERC, with regards to cost related to preparedness, FERC has jurisdiction over the reliability standards of the bulk collector systems, other than taxes in the continental U.S. all of your utilities are subject to these reliability standards that surround utilities. Threats are always above and beyond that. States and Territories need to understand their roles in helping utility companies. The cost of satisfying those standards is important and one thing states and territories can help their utility companies keep costs down and not pass them on to their residents or consumers. There are also private citizens whereby backyards will be affected by these new projects. We need to bring

states to the tables during the planning process, there can be more support earlier on part of the planning.

Governor Phil Scott of Vermont shared about environmental groups and other challenges encountered that are impediments to progress as projects are getting started. Mr. Bordoff expressed the need to have Environmental Reviews and although these projects need to be built as soon as possible, complying with environmental regulations is critical. Planning will always help.

There are available resources by way of funding, subject matter expertise, and guidance with established plans that can assist American Samoa in understanding risks, threats, and tools to prepare for, respond to and recover from untimely events and attacks that can disrupt energy supplies in the Territory.

Recommendations:

- Partnerships with states, local, tribal, and territories
- Enhance awareness of states and territories to avoid having power interruptions for days.
- Develop the plans in building resilience, BIL and implement informed projects for states and territories.
- Develop prepared plans for 5 years down the line.
- Assist law enforcement on the local level, FBI, and fusion centers using the BIL funding

Network:

Allison Clements, Puesh Kumar, Brandi Martin, and Governor Lou Guerrero of Guam

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U.S. Department of State

Attendees: Director Dr. Tapaau Aga

The main goals discussed in the session were: 1. Engage the Governors at the regional level; 2. Ensure foreign policy “trickle down” to local communities (This includes investment (CPIF funds); and 3. Ensure the policy is done at the sub-national levels (best practices). There was also a discussion about the pressure points in American Samoa. The three main pressure points shared by American Samoa include China’s threat that has quickly brought attention to the pacific territories, climate change, and fishing rights.



Governor Lemanu should have received an invitation to CITIES SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS, Denver, Colorado. See [www. CITIES SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS.org/](http://www.CITIES SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS.org/)

U.S. Department of Education

Attendees: Deputy Director Dr. Teresa Atuatasi and Dr. Josephine Paulo



The session discussed the challenges, educational needs, and commitment to improving students, educators, and schools. The challenges include the lack of academic support, student awareness, and educator recruitment and retention. Solutions discussed include school programs (homework clubs for schools), literacy clubs, and science and Math literacy. Suggested initiatives for action items include parent engagement, cross-agency collaboration addressing student mental health and wellbeing, growth of teachers; strategic plans and professional development for teachers involving learning communities, and creating pathways to train student teachers. The discussions also reviewed the improvement of learning conditions such as fixing teacher shortages and investing in every student’s mental health and well-being.

Recommendations:

- Parent Engagement
- Cross-agency collaboration addressing student mental health and well-being

Network:

- Adam Honeysett, USDOE Managing Director, State, and Local Engagement
- Lauren Mendoza, USDOE Deputy Assistant Secretary for State and Local Outreach
 - Continuing this dialogue and assisting us in the Secretary's raise the Bar-Lead with priorities website with educational benefits for students, parents, and school.
- NGA Partners Policy discussion- Program Directors; Seth Gerson, Jordan Hynes, Rachael Parker, and Amanda Winters.
 - Provided us with incentives related to our challenges, moving forward with the implementation of professional development programs to help the teachers.
 - Boost teacher salary
 - Teacher retention programs
- Dr. Rosie Connor, Director of Public Policy
 - Advocating Teacher ED teaching program to earn education degrees online at Western Governors University.
- Janelle Duray, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President.
 - Outreaching to bring Jobs of America's Graduates (JAG) to American Samoa.
 - Impact forces to help assist graduates in securing employment while waiting for school.
 - Promote youth leadership through the JAG Career Association.



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Attendees: Directors Tuiafono Vaiulu Sua Jr. & Solia Tasi Mutini



The session discussed how food inspectors can assist the government in ensuring that food is safe to consume. Inspections should be recorded for accountability purposes and provide data to be used for any health issues related to the foods. The Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP) supports the development, coordination, and expansion of direct producer-to-consumer marketing of local and regional food markets and enterprises, and value-added agricultural products. The primary goals of LAMP are to connect and cultivate regional food economies through public-private partnerships, support the development of business plans, feasibility studies, and strategies for value-added agricultural production and local and regional food system

infrastructure, strengthen capacity and regional food system development through community collaboration and expansion of mid-tier value chains, improve income and economic opportunities for producers and food businesses through job creation and simplify the application processes and the reporting processes for the Program.

Recommendations:

- Inspector to return to American Samoa
- Have ASDoA manage the distribution of local crops to benefit all the local farmers at the DOE School Lunch Program

Network:

- Elizabeth Archuleta: Director of the Office of Internal and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Mia Mayberry- Deputy Director

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Attendees: Director Tuiafono Vaiuli Sua Jr.

The brief session discussed opportunities for getting more EV school buses for ASDOE. Grants will be available opening up in March or April to assist in getting programs that assist with protecting the environment. EPA develops standards or regulations under environmental statutes; enforces those standards, regulations, and statutes; monitors pollutants in the environment; conducts research; and promotes public environmental education.

Recommendations:

- Be aggressive when requesting grants and school busses

Network:

- Keylin Rivera- Special Advisor Intergovernmental Affairs

U.S. Department of Defense

Attendees: Director Tuiafono Vaiuli Sua Jr.

The question raised in the session is about having the National Guard present in American Samoa. The discussion recommended reaching out to Pacific Command in Hawaii (PACCOM) about the possibility of establishing a National Guard presence in American Samoa. The session also included discussions around Chinese influence. The Government needs to look into security from the Chinese influence which will be beneficial in creating more jobs. Another recommendation was that the Veteran can decommission military equipment such as boats can be a benefit to the territory.

Office of U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)

Attendees: Director Petti Matila

This office is directly under the Executive Office of the President (White House). USTR does not provide funding opportunities as everything relevant to its mission is funded through the U.S. Department of Commerce. USTR navigates the legal aspects of conducting U.S. business offshore. USTR is strategically involved with the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and has invited me to prepare an application to represent American Samoa at their upcoming roundtable discussions for the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework Council.

Recommendations:

- American Samoa can utilize the USTR for legal matters pertaining to exports. This would only apply to all “Made in USA” (including Made in American Samoa) products.
- I’ve emailed Ms. Sokolowski for more details on how American Samoa can be part of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework discussions.

Network:

Ms. Sophia Sokolowski

Export-Import Bank of the United States

Attendees: Director Petti Matila

EXIM Bank is the only official export credit agency in the United States. Its mission is to support U.S. jobs by facilitating exports by filling the gaps in private-sector financing, supplementing and encouraging private capital, and leveling the playing field for U.S. exporters. EXIM Bank is demand-driven, and they accept credit-worthy applicants. Their Office of Small Businesses does export credit and regional export programs including training opportunities.

EXIM Bank has a program called China and Transformational Exports Program (CTEP) to support the extension of loans, guarantees, and insurance at rates and on fully competitive terms, to the extent practicable, with those provided by China to directly neutralize and advance the comparative leadership of the U.S. concerning China in strategic Industries. EXIM can provide outreach and financing mandates for small businesses; minority and women-owned businesses; renewable, energy efficiency, and energy storage/environmentally beneficial exports; China and Transformational Exports; Rural businesses; Agricultural exports; Veteran and Persons with Disabilities-Owned businesses, and startups. EXIM Bank can be another resource for local businesses to finance their exporting needs.



Recommendations:

- Reconnect with Mr. Day and Mr. Stephens via email to plan an outreach workshop for the business community on the island. This can be coordinated in partnership with the American Samoa Chamber of Commerce.

Network:

- Mr. Christopher Day- Senior Vice President, Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental affairs
- Mr. Aerek

U.S. Department of Commerce

Attendees: Director Petti Matila & Chief Loa Laupola



Chief of Staff Loa and Director Petti met with USDOC representatives from the First Responder Network Authority (also known as FirstNet), the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). This was an opportunity to follow up on the status of the FirstNet for American Samoa. Efforts are underway by the FirstNet team to send a group to American Samoa soon. We also reported the lengthy process for a non-first responding agency that signs up for FirstNet service. They will look into it with the service provider (AT&T). The staff at NTIA also met with COS Loa and Director Petti regarding ongoing broadband development efforts on the island. Affordability and Accessibility are imperative to future broadband initiatives across the U.S. An EDA representative who was also in attendance encouraged us to meet

with the new EDA Representative for American Samoa who's based out of Hawaii. We also shared about ongoing work to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Recommendations:

- Follow-up with the FirstNet program staff to ensure the process is efficient.
- Work with EDA on the TechHub Program and how American Samoa can apply, and move forward with the BEAD Program State Plan.
- NITA plans to award up to \$100Million for US Territories around June 2023.

Network:

- Mr. Tom Shull, Director of Government Affairs (FirstNet)
- Mr. Jack Cobb, Intergovernmental Affairs Specialist (FirstNet)
- Ms. Grace Kelly, Sr. Advisory for Intergovernmental Affairs (NTIA),
- Ms. Daria Daniel, Congressional Affairs Specialist (EDA)
- Ms. Bernadette L. Carrillo, Director of Intergovernmental

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

Attendees: Director Petti Matila

Mr. Williams introduced himself to Director Petti. He wanted to meet and greet Governor Lemanu and mentioned plans for a future visit to American Samoa by HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge.

Recommendations:

- American Samoa is a HUD grantee through its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investment Partnership Program, CDBG-Disaster Recovery, and CDBG Mitigation funds. A visit by HUD Secretary would be a very first one for the Territory, and an opportunity to showcase our ongoing and prospective projects for funding.

Network:

- Mr. Alan Williams, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Intergovernmental Relations

U.S. Department of Interior

Attendees: Director [Faleosina Voigt](#) & Director Misipati Salanoa

The Department of Parks and Recreation is awaiting the receipt of its full allocation for FY22. This is for the Lions Park improvement project. Shanta had already followed up with the National Park Service program folks in an email that we were copied in as a result of this meeting. Mr. Richard Lukas, NGA Legislative Director, was made aware of this matter for his assistance. Shanta will keep us informed as soon as she gets the information from the National Park Service.

Recommendations:

- Continue this one-on-one network in future NGA meetings
- Ensure that all state and territory are afforded this opportunity to meet one-on-one in person with their respective federal counterparts by having more spots available
- Director Ken Tupuola to follow up with Shanta and National Park Services Grant Managers.

**Infrastructure & Energy**

Attendees: Director Faleosina Voigt, Director Misipati Salanoa, Director Solia Mutini, & Rev. Patolo Mageo



NGA Center for Best Practices, in identifying, researching, and disseminating best practices in state public policy. Advises and engages on legislative and regulatory issues in transportation, economic and community development, commerce, telecommunications, public finance, tax, and international trade. Work with state leaders on broadband, transportation, and implementation of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA). Mr. Curtin leads NGA's Infrastructure, Broadband, and Transportation on Advisors Networks. Provide expert guidance to Governors and their advisors on state energy policy, utility regulation, broadband, infrastructure resilience, and technology innovation.

Recommendations:

- Continue Dialogue with respective presenters in reference to transportation and infrastructure resilience and issues
- Identify and adopt best practices that will best address our issues to avoid revamping the wheels
- Designate DPW Director as a infrastructure Coordinator for ASG, with Director Lisa Togiai
- Develop a territorial plan describing priorities and mandates on how AS administers different programs outlined in the IIJA such as Water, Built Infrastructure, Natural Infrastructure, Broadband, Energy and Legacy Pollution. and all other funding sources for Health Care, Education, Workforce Development, Economic Development, and etc.
- Prepare American Samoa to share its best practices in future NGA meetings;

Network:

- Timothy (Tim) Blute- Director, NGA
- Richard Lukas- Legislative
- Director Will Carraco- Program Director, NGA
- Thomas (Tom) Curtin- Directors for NGA's Infrastructure program
- Dan Lauf- Energy Program Director, NGA
- Jessica Rackley- Program Director, NGA

Partners Policy Discussion: Healthcare

Attendees: Dr. Siniva Mann, Special Projects Manager
Patrick Ti'a Reid, Public Policy Advisor



The panel session was centered on some of the key priorities of the NGA in terms of healthcare based on the challenges and trends shared by the states and territories. This includes everything from unwinding from the Public Health Emergency, Medicaid, connecting public health and the healthcare system, workforce challenges, and a focus on infant and maternal health is given the current Chair's priority focus. The panel also made mention of the healthcare workforce knowledge exchange network in which 27 states and 1 territory (American Samoa) are participants.

American Samoa was fortunate to be selected as the sole participant in an NGA Policy Academy from September 2021 - September 2022 focused on improving state strategies for polysubstance and stimulant use along with four other states combating substance use challenges. Through the relationships developed with NGA Program staff, our contacts have continued to be a tremendous policy resource and support for American Samoa based on the ongoing challenges and priorities

we've shared with them. Upon reconnecting with the NGA Program Directors Dr. Shelby and Marianne, we were invited to a round table discussion happening in March on the issue of substance use and to share some of the work happening in American Samoa.

Recommendations:

- Continue American Samoa's participation in healthcare workforce knowledge exchange network to receive technical assistance, best practices, and lessons learned on improving our Territory's healthcare workforce (recruitment and retention, licensure, legislation, etc)
- Seek out relevant policy academies, initiatives, and knowledge exchange opportunities available with the National Governors Association as relevant to Lemanu-Talauega Administration's policy priorities and problem/challenge areas.
- Identify or hire additional policy staff with the relevant educational/professional background to be housed in the Governor's Office and to ensure the advancement of key policy priority areas of the Lemanu-Talauega administration

Network:

- Britney Roy, NGA
- Dr. Shelby Hockenberry, NGA
- Abigail Smith, NGA
- Marianne Gibson, NGA

Communications

Attendees: Siniva Mann

The panel discussion focused on strategies on how to effectively communicate the Governor's initiatives to the public. Discussions include best practices and how to better build relationships with journalists and other media sources. The panel highlighted the use of social media platforms to get to different audiences. Social media can also be a challenge with its open forum function. The communication team must be proactive and be prepared to have a narrative to respond to questions and concerns. The Governor should have a press secretary to respond on his behalf. When building a good relationship with journalists, the communication team can better control timing and narrative. The communication will need to be creative on how to inform the public and highlight the current administration's initiatives.

Recommendations:

- Build a strong relationship with journalists
- Use all social media channels
- Be proactive and release press releases immediately after an event
- Attend NGA Communications Training later in the year (Date TBD)

Network:

- Eric Wohlsdörfer, NGA Communications Director
- Richard Motta, Virgin Islands Communications Director
- Frankie Eliptico, CNMI Communications Staff

**Workforce & Education**

Attendees: Director Petti Matila

One of our Administration's priorities is the importance of aligning education, the workforce, and the economy. This would allow for economic growth and development across public and private organizations in the territory. It is an opportunity to advance economic mobility and address workforce shortage across the U.S. It is imperative to strategize and align incentives to attract skilled workers to our community. It is also important to look into our local people as there may be barriers that prevent them from being employed. They're potentially untapped and hidden talent within our reach. Advancing digital literacy is key in this day and age. Entrepreneurship & Job Growth are a priority. P20 Workforce Data Systems can measure innovative performance. Some states have this system in place. Skilled-based hiring can also be done if the workforce isn't required to be a degree-holder. Need to identify our skills gap. Class Wallet App or Service was introduced at this session. Work with WIOA on rising and stranded skills that need to be introduced to our local workforce.

Recommendations:

- Initiate discussions with both public (DHR, DOE, DOC, LA-Immigration etc.,) and private (Chamber of Commerce) sectors on ways to address the workforce shortages on the island.
- Identify ways to look into our own community to find untapped talent
- Initiate a program to acquire local workforce certification in high demand areas (e.g., nursing, carpentry, etc.,)

Network:

- Ms. Rachel Stephens Parker, NGA

Plenary Session I: Strengthening Youth Mental Health

Attendees: Governor Lemanu, Cabinet members, and staff

The pandemic had an elevated risk of mental health issues for the youth, especially with the involvement of social media in this day and age. There's a need for culturally relevant care for the youth. The most difficult thing is when parents see their child suffering but do not know how to care for them. There are three main things the Federal can provide: Funding (expanding behavioral health centers and investing in mental health workforce); Authorities (e.g. telemedicine authorities, parity law); and Roadmaps (guidance). The partnership is essential. It is important to know what is happening in our community. Social connection (loneliness) also increases people's risk of depression and anxiety. The government needs to rebuild the social fabric of our country and be mindful of the quality of social connections. Absorbing toxic content via social media can be a toxic trend. Governor Murphy ensured we have "lived in experience" individuals on the panel to share their stories. It is important to coach the coaches (e.g. parents). Again, having practice-based evidence is key.

A comprehensive playbook will be ready by July 2023. A holistic approach with four Pillars was also discussed in the session. The four pillars are: Seek alignment and momentum, Prevention and Resilience Building, and Increase Awareness. Reduce Stigma, Ensure Access and Affordability, and Training and Support for Caregivers and teachers.



The panel also discussed First Lady Murphy's initiative with reducing disparities in maternal mortality. The goal is to support pregnant women and bring awareness that inequities are vast. Data reports that 80% of deaths from pregnancies are preventable. First Lady Murphy spoke about universal home nurse care for mothers and their babies early on. The commitment to mental health by viewing it as primary care is essential.

Recommendations:

- Take advantage of the upcoming Comprehensive Playbook from NGA as a key resource to help promote behavioral health care for the youth and our overall population in AS. We can reference it for grant funding purposes.
- Allow DHSS, DOH, LBJ, and local mental health care related entities like the VA, EPIC Non-profit group to collaborate based on best practices from the playbook.
- Ask NGA for technical assistance and referral to key resources.
- Universal Home Visitation
- Certified Nurses that visit the mother within 2 weeks of giving birth

Network:

- Bill McBride, NGA Executive Director
- Governor Phil Murphy (NJ)
- Governor Spencer Cox (UT)
- Vivek Murphy, U.S. Surgeon General
- Dr. Alfiee Breland-Noble, Founder, The AAKOMA Project

Plenary Session II: Workforce Shortages and Opportunities

Attendees: Director Petti Matila, Director Lisa Tuato'o, Director Faleosina Voigt, Patrick Ti'a Reid

It is important to prepare our local workforce for future jobs (e. g., digital skills). Governors must take the lead in creating opportunities to “reskill and upskill” our local workforce. Take a consortium approach to address our workforce needs. Accelerate Montana is a good example of a training program that provides 12 weeks of training to upskill workers. Microsoft VC and Pres Brad Smith stated that they can provide the digital curriculum while communities can provide the faculty to be trained for the work to be done. AECOM can handle the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process through a digital solutions system. Federal permitting is too lengthy. An efficient permitting process can help accelerate economic growth. The workforce shortage is an ongoing challenge across the nation.

Recommendations:

- Send a letter to VC and Pres Brad Smith to follow-up on his statement to provide a digital curriculum. Ask Microsoft to partner with American Samoa over a digital training program for AS students

Concurrent Task Force Meetings- Economic Development: Governor's Leadership in Technology and Energy Innovation

Attendees: Director Petti Matila and Director Faleosina Voigt

This Task Force is Chaired by the Governor of South Carolina (SC), Mr. Henry McMaster. SC is among the largest nuclear-powered (clean energy) states in the nation. SC is also a leading state in solar farms and battery manufacturing companies. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Alejandra Castillo mentioned 13 different divisions of offices under the US Department of Commerce as follows: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), U.S. Economic Census Bureau, Economic Development Administration (EDA), Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs (OUS/EA), International Trade Administration (ITA), Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA). Castillo spoke about looking forward to rolling out a new program called Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs). This is one way we can re-imagine and prepare a new ecosystem of economic growth across the nation. NTIA's Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program Plans are due soon, and NTIA plans to announce or release BEAD awards around June 2023. FCC Maps are being developed. Regional economic development has no borders and can reach far and wide. Maria Robinson from the US Department of Energy's Grid Deployment Office spoke about various energy innovation programs funded by USDOE including EV Charging infrastructure resources, creating a resilient electric grid, etc. USDOE can also provide tax credits. Efforts are underway to push for clean energy infrastructure. There is an energy hub in one of the states, but it's also important to think of the need for an energy workforce (building domestic/local capacity is key). Technical Assistance funds can also be requested from the USDOE. They can also assist with supply chain issues relevant to clean energy initiatives and can also assist energy-related manufacturing companies.



Recommendations:

- Re-establish the Territorial Energy Commission to develop mandates for carbon emission reduction in the power sector by certain year, and carbon zero by certain year to align with the federal mandates through the use of renewable energy solutions;
- Develop and implement goal(s) for renewable energy solutions;
- Develop statewide goal to require carbon emission reduction in the transportation sector by certain year, through the use of electric vehicles;
- Develop a goal for the number of electric vehicles to be on the road by certain year;
- Develop a goal for the number of electric school buses by certain year;
- Identify electric highway corridor for the plan for electric vehicles
- Identify source of funding for transportation as transition from fuel to electric vehicles (the gas tax will be reduced and eventually eliminated as transition to electric vehicles).

Network:

- Aamir Paul, Schneider Electric
- Alejandra Castillo, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Maria Robinson, U.S. Department of Energy

NGA Photos













